

Daily Assignment

Sunday, December 19, 2010

Daily Assignment #31: Energizers

Energizers are get up and move activities that can take 60 seconds, or longer, to do. They are a quick way of getting the blood from the butt back up to the brain. Energizers can also be a community building activity. Students need them, particularly if they have been sitting through a sit-and-get instructional period. It doesn't matter the age group, we all need a stand and stretch moment. Think about it. Have you ever been in a class where you have been unable to maintain your attention on the instructor because you just need to move around? As gifted and exciting as we are as teachers, believe me, your students have tuned you out as well during instruction. So, get them up and moving. You'll get more out of them when they return to their seats.

Here are a few examples of quick energizers:

1. "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean": Everyone begins by being seated. Then begin singing the song. Everytime a "b" word is said either stand or sit. So, for the first "b" word, (Bonnie), everyone stands. Then for the second "b" word, again Bonnie, everyone sits. Continue with this pattern. If it has been done correctly, everyone will end up seated.
2. Simon Says: I know you all know this one. However, let me offer this simpler version--only do head, shoulder, waist, and knees. Also, no one is ever out. Just smile and keep going. This way keeps everyone engaged and no one is sitting out, and possibly being disruptive.
3. Simply stand and stretch.
4. Zip, Zap, Zop: Stand in a circle. One person has a nerf ball or beach ball. They make eye contact with someone across the circle and says "Zip" and throws the ball at that person. That person makes eye contact with someone else across the circle, says "Zap" and throws the ball at that person. Then that person makes eye contact across the circle, says "Zop" and throws the ball at that person. Then it all begins again. The pace can be quite fast. They cannot throw it at a person beside them. They have to throw the ball across the circle.
5. Catch Me If You Can: Players should be paired up. All players divide into two lines (facing in) shoulder to shoulder, with partners facing each other. Participants should be given approximately 30 seconds to look at their partners, taking in all details about the individual. The leader then instructs the two lines to turn and face away from the center. One or both lines has 15-20 seconds to change something about their

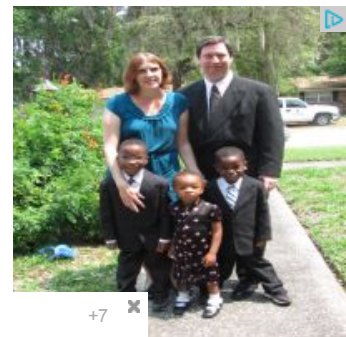
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appearance (i.e. change a watch to different wrist, unbutton a button, remove a belt, etc.). The change must be discrete, but visible to the partner. The players again turn in to face each other and have 30 seconds to discover the physical changes that have been made. Players get to interact with each other and have fun!

6. Sing "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" with actions.

7. Left-Right Alphabet: Write the alphabet on large chart paper. Underneath each letter of the alphabet, put an L or R.

A B C D E F G H ...

L L R L R R R L...

Do a random sequence of L's and R's. Students stand and sing the alphabet and, as they do so, they raise either the left arm or right arm depending on the letter. This is great fun, as well as challenging.

8. Think-Pair-Share: When sharing students must stand, make eye contact with someone across the room, walk to them, then share.

I hope you will experiment with at least one energizer. If you have one that you really like, please share it with all of us.

Please share this blogsite with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

This will be my last blog until January 2nd.

I wish you all a healthy, safe and relaxing December break.

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 4:52 PM No comments: 

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About Me

linda103

Educator for 34 years. Classroom teacher- grades 1,2,3,5,6.
Educational consultant for 18 years teaching a graduate level course on effective teaching strategies.

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Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Daily Assignment #30: Interruptions During Instruction

We all have them, Interruptions During Instruction, unwelcome intrusions, e.g. intercom announcements, custodian collecting trash, a student entering the classroom late, parents who drop by, colleagues who want to borrow something, and the list goes on. A day can seem like a series of interruptions with some instruction happening in between.

So, how do we handle these interruptions? Some teachers allow them and then just continue instruction where they left off before the interruption. Other teachers do not allow them. They might turn off the intercom speaker or put the trash barrels outside the classroom door so the custodian doesn't come into the class or put a do not disturb sign on the door. I've known upper grade teachers who have locked their classroom door so that students who are late do not come in and interrupt instruction. And then there are teachers who totally ignore the intrusion and press on.

I think most teachers match their response to the intrusion. A response to a student interruption may be very different than a response to a colleague interrupting instruction. The response might also depend on the type of interruption, e.g. the teacher is teaching a concept to a small group of students and a student, from another group, comes over to ask a question versus the teacher is teaching a concept to a small group of students and a student shouts out a question from across the room.

Whatever the response to the interruption, it sends a message to your students as to what is important to you.

I hope this has given you something to reflect on.

Please share this blogsite with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, please consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 7:09 PM No comments: 

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Sunday, December 12, 2010

Daily Assignment #29: "I" Message

The "I" Message is an effective management strategy. Thomas Gordon coined the phrase, "I" Message, in 1960. It consists of 3 parts:

1. a non-blameful description: When you interrupt my teaching,
2. the effect of the behavior on you: I feel frustrated.
3. what you would like to happen next: I would like you to raise your hand if you want to speak.

Using this language takes the "you" out of the message and makes it nonjudgemental. You are stating facts.

Examples:

1. Jack leaves the lab table and leaves the materials out.

Jack, when you leave the materials out,

I feel afraid that the materials will be broken.

Please put the materials away.

2. Maria finishes eating her snack and leaves, leaving behind her trash.

Maria, when you leave trash on the table,

I feel frustrated because I have to clean it up.

Please put your trash in the wastebasket after eating.

These 3 key phrases can act as a guide :

1. When you...
2. I feel...
3. I would like...

I hope you will take the opportunity to experiment with this strategy. Let me know how it goes.

I hope you will share this blogsite with colleagues and friends.
Also, if you haven't yet, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 6:20 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Daily Assignment #28: Rock/Paper/Scissors

I'm sure you remember this game from childhood. Did you know that children in Japan are taught this game to solve some problems, such as who gets the ball first?

After witnessing the effectiveness of this strategy myself, I decided to implement it in my classroom. I must say, it eliminated me having to deal with a lot of little things that might have otherwise taking up valuable teaching time.

Students used Rock/Paper/ Scissors to solve ---- who got the coveted seat, who were the captains for games at recess, who passed out papers, who used certain art supplies first, and the list goes on. It was wonderful to see the students take total responsibility in solving problems that had the potential to become a major distraction from learning.

If you decide to experiment with this strategy make sure you:

1. name it
2. state what it is for
3. describe how to do it
4. model
5. have students practice
6. give feedback
7. practice more

Tidbit: I had the students stand back to back. Some students would hesitate just long enough to see what the other student was going to do.

Please share this blogsite with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, I hope you will consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 7:18 PM No comments: 

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Sunday, December 5, 2010

Daily Assignment #27: Holidays

For the month of December 2011 here is a list of some of the religious/ethnic holidays:

- Dec. 5 Ashura, Islamic/Muslim
- 6 St. Nicholas Day, International
- 8 Bodhi Day, Buddhist
- 12 Virgin of Guadalupe, Mexico
- 13 Santa Lucia Day, Sweden
- 16-25 Las Posadas, Mexico
- 21-28 Hanukkah, Jewish

25 Christmas, Christians, Roman Catholics, International

26-Jan. 1 Kwanzaa, African Americans

What should happen in the classroom during this holiday season?

Some teachers select several different holidays to teach about religious/ethnic traditions. Other teachers just share holiday traditions for one or two religions/ethnic groups. Another approach would be to ask for parent volunteers to teach their religious/ethnic holiday traditions. An another approach might be to do nothing at all.

I've done it all. For me, I found the best approach was to ask for parent volunteers to come in and do a 30-40 minute presentation. If I didn't know the parent well, I would ask them to share with me their lesson plan in advance. In this way, I could help them with appropriateness for the age group and timing. The parents were always well prepared. It would be an amazing lesson and better than what I would have done.

There would be years when only one parent would come in and I would need to teach 1-2 more holidays. Then other years there might be 3 different parents who would come in to share 3 different holidays. If no one volunteered then I would teach Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa, or a holiday that reflected the population in my class.

I hope you will share this blogsite with colleagues and friends. If you haven't already, consider becoming a "Follower".

Best Effort,
Linda103

Posted by [linda103](#) at 6:33 PM No comments: 

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Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Daily Assignment #26: Cooperative Learning

Cooperative Learning is a phrase that is used a lot but is frequently confused with "Group Work". Cooperative Learning is different from Group Work. Group work is random grouping of students working on an assignment or task together.

Cooperative Learning begins with the teacher purposefully selecting students, with various abilities, to work together as a team on a project or assignment. Each team member is responsible, not only for their learning, but for each team members learning and completion of the task. Everyone succeeds when the group succeeds.

There is a cooperative learning structure called "Jigsaw". Students are part of a home team, which consist of 4-5 teacher selected students. The members of the home team break into expert groups, which are made up of other students from home teams. Each expert group learns a specific assignment and then returns to their home team to teach that information. Everyone in the home teams must sign off that they know, and could represent, the home team on any of the information.

Example:

Social Justice Legends

1. Class is divided into 5 groups of 4 by the teacher. These 5 groups are the Home Teams.
2. In each Home Team, have the students letter off---A, B, C, D.
3. As teams, all the A's are to study Martin Luther King Jr. All the B's will study Eleanor Roosevelt. The C's will study Mahatma Gandhi and the D's will study former president Jimmy Carter. These are the expert teams. Together they go over the information on the legend and decide how they will present it to their Home Teams.
4. After a period of time, 20-30 mins., depending on the groups and information, students return to their Home Teams to teach their legend.
5. Once each expert has completed teaching, they must be sure everyone in the Home Team understands and knows the information. Encourage Home Team members to ask clarifying questions.
6. The Home Teams number off--- Home Team 1, Home Team 2, Home Team 3, Home Team 4, Home Team 5.
7. The teacher checks for understanding. The teacher draws a name of one of the legends from a hat and then a letter, A,B,C,D, and then a Home Team number. The person with the matching letter from the Home Team drawn, must give the data on the legend the teacher drew. I hope this makes sense.

There are so many benefits from doing Cooperative Learning--students working together, everyone must participate, students as teachers, efficient way to teach, students must listen and respect each other in order for learning to occur, new and interesting way to present new content, the teacher is not the teacher, to mention a few.

Here is a great link if you want more information:

<http://www.jigsaw.org/overview.htm>

I hope you experiment with this strategy. I've used it many times and it is amazing how productive the students are and invested in their learning.

Please share this blogsite with colleagues and friends and, if you haven't already, become a "Follower".

If you are following this site through Facebook, please know, I will not be advertising on Facebook the month of December. However, I will continue to post my blog. So, you might want to bookmark this link.

Thanks so much for your support.

Linda103

Posted by **linda103** at 6:24 PM No comments: 

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Teacher Lingo



Daily Assignment

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